

# **WINDLASS RUN/BIRD RIVER ROAD AREA COMMUNITY PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

On December 16, 1996, the Baltimore County Council passed Council Resolution 112-96, which called for the preparation of a community plan for the Windlass Run/Bird River Road area. The resolution's objective was to examine the changing demographics, land use and social patterns evidenced in recent years and to provide recommendations that would allow for orderly development, while preserving the quality of life of residents.

The genesis of the Windlass Run/Bird River Road community plan can be traced to events that began with the formation of the Windlass Run Improvement Association in March of 1995 and culminated in the comprehensive rezoning of the area during the 1996 Comprehensive Zoning Map Process (CZMP).

In 1994, residents of the Windlass Run community learned about plans to develop 150± single family detached homes at a site located between Gladway Road and Sterling Avenue. Generally, residents were not opposed to the development of single family detached homes. They were, however, concerned that Gladway Road, a narrow 16 feet wide street, would be inadequate to accommodate the amount of traffic generated by the proposed development. Unified in their concern, they formed the Windlass Run Improvement Association.

During the 1996 CZMP process, the Windlass Run Improvement Association became actively involved in raising zoning Issue #5-049. They envisioned their community as a single family residential area and requested the rezoning of industrially and high density residentially zoned land to lower density residential zoning. Except for a few changes, the County Council adopted the requested zoning.

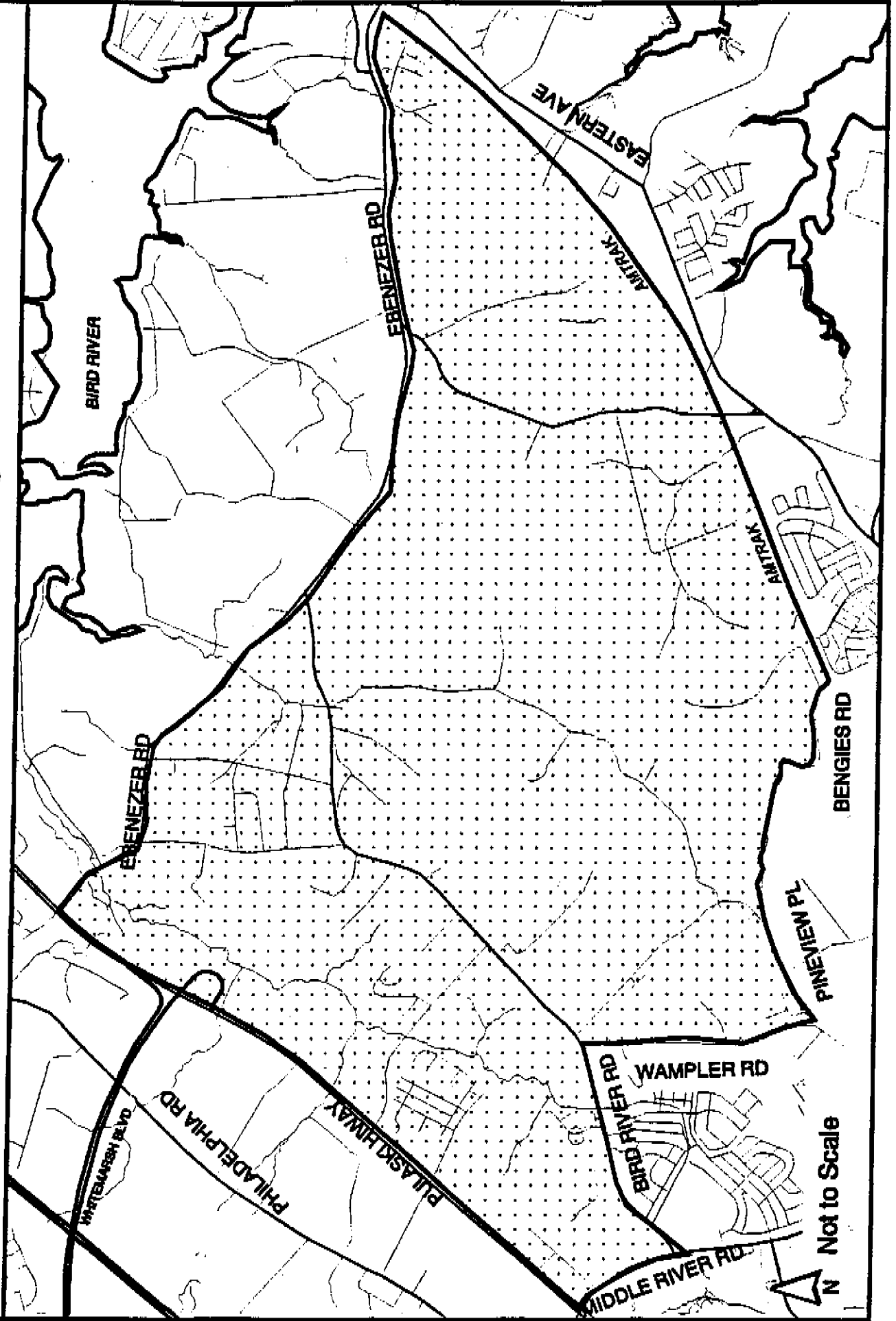
While the zoning changes were directed toward reinforcing the single-family character of the area, they also facilitated residential development on parcels that previously had industrial zoning. Additionally, there remained development possibilities for numerous unimproved sites with longtime residential zoning. All new development would access the existing street system, which consists of narrow country roads.

Because of the development and zoning activity in the Windlass Run/Bird River Road area, the County Council asked for the preparation of a community plan and recommendations that would address the impact which new developments could have on the community.

Under the guidance of the Office of Planning, an advisory group was formed consisting of area residents, business people, representatives of the development community as well as a representative of "Our Lady Queen of Peace" church, a local institution. Initially most of the community representatives were members of the Windlass Run Improvement Association. Later, the advisory group was joined by residents of the Vincent Farm area, which resulted in a more balanced representation.

# WINDLASS RUN / BIRD RIVER ROAD AREA COMMUNITY PLAN

Map of Boundaries of Study Area



The group met on a biweekly basis beginning on February 11, 1997, through May 9, 1997. During the initial meetings, the boundary of the study area was established and the purpose of the community plan was explained. Subsequent meetings were devoted to presentations dealing with topics that provided relevant background information about the study area.

In addition to the presentations, several other mechanisms were used to gain insights and information about the study area. Advisory group members were asked to fill out two questionnaires (see Appendix). These were used to develop a vision statement for the community. One questionnaire simply asked to list the things the respondents like and dislike about their community. The second questionnaire asked respondents how they envision the area 20 years from now, to list community goals and to suggest policies that would help implement the goals. Additionally, planning staff toured the area with a resident to receive an "insiders" view of the area. Numerous other field visits deepened that understanding.